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## **First student named to Higher Education Coordinating Board**

**OLYMPIA** - Gov. Gary Locke has named Stacey Valentin, a senior at Western Washington University, as the first student member of the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB).

Valentin, 23, is a senior at Western, majoring in history and special education with a minor in social studies.

As a member of the Washington Student Lobby, Valentin was instrumental in getting the Legislature to pass House Bill 2841, which added a student member to the nine-member citizen Board. The Board administers the state's financial aid programs and provides planning, coordination, monitoring and policy analysis for higher education in Washington. State law requires the board to represent "the broad public interest above the interests of the individual colleges and universities."

"Stacey is the ideal person to serve as the first student member of the Higher Education Coordinating Board," Locke said. "She's the reason that students now have a voice on the board, and I'm confident she will do a great job and be a passionate advocate for students across the state."

Marc Gaspard, executive director of the Higher Education Coordinating Board, said Valentin brings a strong commitment and an impressive resume and valuable experience to the HECB.

"The Board's focus of placing the student at the center of higher education issues and policies will be well served by Stacey's involvement on the Board," Gaspard said.

"Having a student member on the Higher Education Coordinating Board is the next step to involving the student perspective in planning for the future of higher education. After all, it is the student who is the customer of higher education," Valentin

said. “Students lobbied for 39 years to add a student member to boards of regents and trustees, who plan for their individual schools. So it makes sense to have a student to participate in the planning for the entire state.”

Valentin has been a member of the Washington Student Lobby organization since 1998, serving as vice president of legislative affairs from 2001-01 and president from 2001-02. During her association with Associated Students of Western Washington University, Valentin served as legislative liaison and as vice president of community and legislative affairs.

She also was a member of the Kiwanis Club from 1996-98.

Valentin attended North Kitsap High School in Poulsbo, where she was active in athletics. She served as a Special Olympics coach for four years, was a member of the North Kitsap Swim Team, and participated in the Whatcom Splash.

The next meeting of the Board is set for Sept. 25 in Olympia.

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